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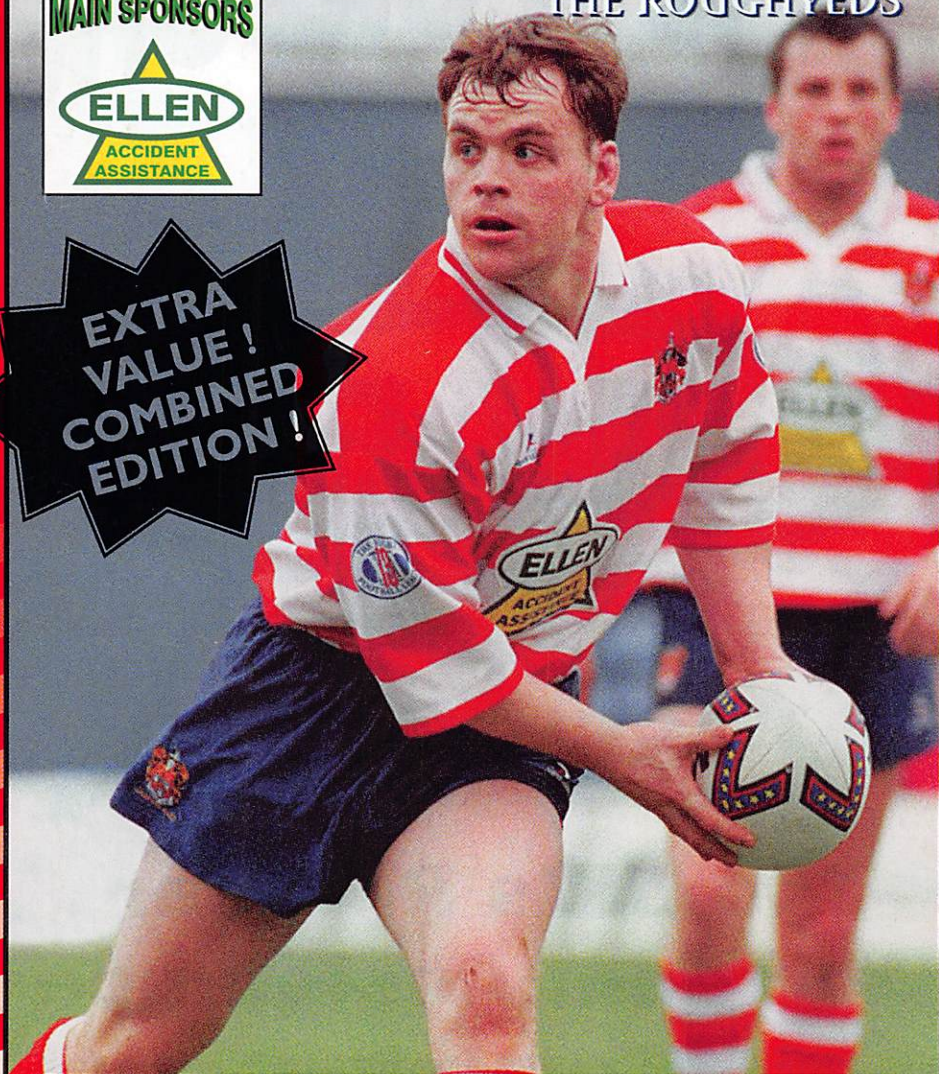
OLDHAM RLFC

"THE ROUGHYEDS"

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**RUGBY FOOTBALL LEAGUE DIV TWO
V LANCASHIRE LYNX At BOUNDARY PARK
WED 26TH AUGUST 1998 K.O. 7.30 PM**

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Chairman's CHATTER

"THE ROUGHYEDS"

TONIGHT sees part two in our eight day trilogy and life is certainly not getting any easier with our opponents Lancashire Lynx still being top of the League. If anything, the game could be even harder than we anticipated as Lynx have lost their last two matches by only one point and consequently I am certain that they will now be even more determined to stop the rot. This in itself will contribute to tonight's task being just that little bit more difficult for our players.

There is no hiding from the fact that our recent performances have been way below expectations. Even in the games we have won against both Workington and Doncaster we have been somewhat fortunate and there is no mistaking the fact that whilst other teams in the promotion hunt have stepped up a gear we have slipped back. There have been several mitigating factors, including injuries, but we must not hide behind that because that would be taking the



easy option. The ultimate prize of promotion is still there and the players will have been made aware (in no uncertain terms) that it is up to them to go out and perform as though they want to achieve it. There has, in the last few games, been a noticeable absence of fighting spirit which was so prevalent in the earlier part of the season when the team just didn't know when it was beaten. Whilst I fully appreciate that there is a far greater level of team spirit when winning, it does, without any shadow of doubt provide a great attribute when the going gets tough. It also helps lift the crowd!

On that note a big thank you to everybody who made the trip to Batley on Sunday. You did your best to lift the team but unfortunately it wasn't to be. Please do not lose heart, we need your support and with it we will realise our objectives.

Enjoy the game and please be vocal.

Christopher Hamilton



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THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THIS MATCHDAY MAGAZINE DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THOSE OF THE MANAGEMENT AND STAFF OF OLDHAM RLFC (1997) LTD.



Comments from THE COACH

WE have come a long way since this programme was originally published for the game scheduled for Good Friday. At the time I expected the division to be very tough and so it has proved. We did not get off to the best of starts with two defeats by Bramley, but from there we recovered well and improved enough to win the Red Rose division. Since winning the division and playing in the Trans Pennine Final our form has slipped. To stay in the promotion race we need a big game tonight and a big improvement in our attacking play.

Over the three games against tonight's, opponents Lancashire Lynx, the honours have been even. Each team has had a home win plus an 18-18 draw in the first game at



Preston Grasshoppers. For us that was a point lost and we will be going all out to make amends tonight. I am looking forward to playing another night match. For me as a player the atmosphere at night matches, particularly at Watersheddings, was always special. It was similar at Spotland against Lynx and I hope it will be the same again tonight.

After leading the division for most of the season Lynx have slipped recently. With a tough run in playing ourselves and Batley instead of looking at the Championship they may not even gain promotion. Tonight there is everything to play for. Enjoy the game, it should be a fiery encounter!

Paddy Kirwan

OLDHAM RLFC SUPPORTERS CLUBS PRESENTATION EVENING

TO mark the end of the inaugural season of Oldham RLFC (1997) the Supporters Clubs are organising a Player of the Year Awards Presentation evening on Friday the 25th September 1998 at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, Oldham.

Although the main purpose of the evening will be to present awards to those players who have excelled or become firm favourites with the supporters, we believe the evening will not only be an awards ceremony, but an opportunity for everyone who has played their part this year, the Directors, Players, Coaching Staff and Supporters alike, to show their appreciation and celebrate together the end of our first season and the successes we as a Club have achieved.

The awards presentations will commence at approximately 9.00pm thereafter the evening will be handed over to the Disco for

everyone to enjoy the rest of the evening dancing or just celebrating what we hope will be the ultimate prize of promotion.

There will be a free draw for all members of the Supporters Clubs who attend the evening, so please remember your membership card.

A Voting form for the Player of the Year will be sent to all members of the Supporters Clubs within the next few days.

We hope as many fans as possible will attend the awards, which we hope will be both an enjoyable and rewarding evening for both the Club and its supporters.

Tickets for the evening priced at £5.00 will be available shortly from any of the Supporters Club officials or the Club Shop.

Check out the local press or contact your Supporters Club official for further details.



From The EDITOR

"THE ROUGHYEDS"

IT SHOULD be an obvious starting point for any form of competition that everyone begins on a level playing field. That is why 'drug cheats' have to be driven out of sport. But it is also why at the beginning of any season all clubs in team competition should start with equal resources. Look at the current League tables and read the signs. Huddersfield Giants prop up Super League, Gary Schofield gets the chop and Neil Harmon departs to Bradford Bulls. And guess what? Huddersfield do not receive the same funding as all the other sides in super league.

Now look at Division One. Bottom are Leigh Centurions and another coach is sacked. Third from bottom Widnes Vikings have had to dismantle their team and part company with Graeme West, one of the best coaches in the game. And, surprise, surprise, neither of these Clubs receives the same financial share-out as the rest.

With such obvious signs of inequality producing an outcome which could easily be anticipated what chance will Gateshead have in Super League IV when they will start £250,000 down on the rest? And if Gateshead end up propping up the League as Huddersfield have done, what price the credibility of the game as a whole?

Meanwhile at the other end of the scale, Wigan Warriors flout the salary cap and top the League. Leeds Rhinos virtually run Bramley as a reserve side (and receive extra money to do so) to occupy second place. Is it the case, therefore, that Halifax Blue Sox are actually the best side in Super League? As far as we know Halifax have pulled no stunts to get where they are and the Club is constructing a

new stadium at the same time as running a highly successful side.

So what of the Second Division? A year ago the chairman of Barnsley FC said of his Club's excursion into the Premier League that he felt it was a case of Barnsley versus the world. Given the events of the last two years this is a sentiment that, in Rugby League terms, all Oldham fans can identify with. For make no mistake, both Oldham Bears and now Oldham Roughyeds, have had the odds stacked dramatically against them. That Oldham can be anywhere near a promotion place at this stage of the season is little short of a miracle, because everything that has been achieved thus far is entirely produced from the Club's own resources and without mortgaging the very future of the Club, as is the case with at least two of the division's other contenders for promotion.

All of which leaves us with the vital question: just what has the pot of gold provided by Rupert Murdoch done for the future of the game? Answer – nothing! To the outsider the money appears to have disappeared into the pockets of players, agents, coaches and administrators. Investment in development is minimal. Forward planning is non-existent. Rugby League as a whole barely seems to have a one year plan, let alone a five or ten year project. So who will be the next to add to the list of Nottingham, Blackpool, Prescott, Carlisle etc. A list so nearly joined by Oldham? Because rest assured that at the lower level as things stand rugby league is set to contract rather than expand. But then, for some people, that has been the objective for the last five years.



Don Yates On This Day

DON YATES RECALLS THIS DAY IN HISTORY

THIS evening's match falls exactly 37 years since the two forerunners of tonight's combatants, Blackpool Borough and Oldham, met in a league match at the old St. Annes Road Greyhound Stadium. That match, on Saturday 26th August 1961, was won by Oldham 20-5. Australian winger Jim Foster scored the Boro' try and Bill Lowe added a goal whilst for Oldham winger Mike Bird (2), centre Vin Nestor and scrum-half Frank Pitchford crossed for tries whilst full-back Geoff Sims landed four goals. Twelve months ago, on Tuesday 26th August 1997, Oldham lost a Super League match in Paris 23-12. The defeat confirmed Oldham's relegation from the top flight and accelerated the eventual demise of the Bears.

David Jones appeared on the left wing for Oldham that evening, he is likely to be playing against them this evening.



Phil Larder

It was a much better evening for the Roughyeds on Wednesday 26th August 1970 when Hunslet visited Watersheddings with a depleted squad because of a strike by their senior players. Their mainly amateur line-up was no match for Oldham who won 54-5 with centre Terry Garrett scoring two tries and nine goals and winger Phil Larder crossing for four tries.

There was plenty of high scoring on Sunday 26th August 1990. Centre Jonathan Davies scored four tries and nine goals as Widnes won 70-6 up at Whitehaven in a Lancashire Cup-tie whilst in the same competition Fulham beat Runcorn 50-0 with full-back Greg Pearce landing 11 goals.

Seventy-seven points were scored at Central Park on Saturday 26th August 1950 when Italy opened their six match tour of Britain with a 49-28 defeat at the hands of Wigan. The

Italians lost all six matches on that tour and all seven on a second tour which they made four years later. On Saturday 26th August 1961 another touring team, the New Zealand Kiwis, won 31-20 at Wheldon Road against a combined Castleford-Featherstone Rovers XIII and on Saturday 26th August 1933 the Kangaroo tourists opened their tour with a 13-9 victory over St. Helens Recs. Both sides scored three tries in that match but Australian full-back Frank McMillan landed two goals to snatch victory for the tourists.

Amazingly, or maybe not knowing the Rugby Football League, St. Helens met Widnes in a big local 'derby' match just down the way at Knowsley Road on the same afternoon.

Staying in St. Helens, it was on Bank Holiday Monday, 26th August 1996 that St Helens clinched the first summer Super League title when they beat Warrington 66-14 before a Knowsley Road crowd of 18,098. Centre Alan Hunte scored three of the thirteen Saints' tries that afternoon.

It was on this day in 1990, Sunday 26th August, that two prop-forwards with Oldham connections made debuts in Yorkshire Cup-ties. Chris Parr, signed earlier in the month from Wigan St Patricks, was in the Huddersfield team which won 17-10 at Batley. He later moved to Swinton before joining Oldham and is now with Rochdale Hornets. On the same afternoon Leo Casey made his debut for Featherstone Rovers in a 36-4 home victory over Bramley. He had been signed the previous month from Oldham for £100,000 but has since moved on to Swinton and, like Parr, is now with Rochdale Hornets.

Finally, it was on this day in 1989, Saturday 26th August, that two local teams played each other in their first ever matches in the National Conference League. Saddleworth Rangers defeated British Aerospace 16-10 up at Shaw Hall Bank Road. Rick Clarkson scored a try for Aerospace and Bill Taylor landed three goals whilst for Rangers, current Roughyeds' director Sean Whitehead and Pete Gallagher scored tries with Whitehead also adding four goals.



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